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As the leaves start to turn and summer comes to a close, we hope you have all had a great summer of research. There is nothing like hitting the road on a warm, sunny July day in search of an elusive ancestor in a distant cemetery or musty courthouse. Finding the “right” cemetery and tombstone or locating a long-desired death certificate is only half the fun. Spending time solving family riddles with a loved one is a huge part of why family history has always appealed to me. Frankly, family history is more fun when you have a research partner with whom to develop strategies and share finds.

The Internet has changed the way many family historians and genealogists are doing genealogy, and not always for the better. What used to be a communal activity is rapidly changing. More and more genealogists appear to be chained to their computers and rarely free themselves to take road trips in search of ancestors. The jaunts to faraway, and not so faraway, places are what first attracted me to genealogy. The search was more important than the finds, because I was on a mini-adventure with my great-grandfather. Don't get me wrong. I'm not a Luddite, and I love my computer and appreciate how it has made researching my family history much easier. E-mail allows researchers to correspond with hundreds of people in a given year, and you can't beat the fact that resources like the census have been digitized and made available online. The possibilities are limitless. More and more records are going to be scanned and made available to genealogists in the future.

Unfortunately, the fact is that genealogical society membership is way down from what it was pre-Internet. Attendance at national and local genealogy seminars and conferences has declined in recent years. Many libraries with genealogical collections have also complained of falling use statistics and researcher visits. Is the Internet the sole culprit? Probably not, but think how the Internet has changed your research patterns. Most of us do not have unlimited time to do research, and the Internet has allowed us to do amazing research in our own offices and dens without getting out of our pajamas. It is hard to beat that.

However, as your summer research projects come to a close and you start to organize your latest batch of new finds, think about how you have been conducting the bulk of your research. Maybe there are ways you can get more involved in your local society or re-join if your membership has lapsed. Take the time to attend a local or national genealogy conference or plan an overnight trip to a research facility you have never visited before. Find a research buddy. Become a mentor to someone who doesn't have the research experience that you do and take joy in his or her discoveries of just how much fun family history research can be. Our genealogy community will stay strong only if our societies and research facilities stay strong and active. Get up from behind your computer and let the world know how rewarding the study of family history can be.

Happy searching!

*Randy Riley*  
*Special Collections Manager, Library of Michigan*



# ***October is Family History Month***

During October, the Department of History, Arts and Libraries will again celebrate Family History Month. To help promote the study of family history, the Library of Michigan and Archives of Michigan will offer a wide range of FREE programs throughout the month. Over 25 sessions, ranging from Researching Our Civil War Ancestors to How to Organize Your Family History Research and Beginning Genealogy for the Visually Impaired, will be held during October at the Michigan Library and Historical Center in Lansing. The Library of Michigan is also proud to partner with the Michigan Genealogical Council to present a daylong genealogical seminar on Saturday, Oct. 14. For information regarding how to register for individual sessions, visit <http://www.michigan.gov/familyhistory>.

## ***Getting Started***

### **Tuesday, Oct. 3:**

- 9 to 9:45 a.m.      *Beginning Your Family History Research*
- 10 to 10:45 a.m.      *Family History Resources at the Library of Michigan*
- 11 to 11:45 a.m.      *Genealogical Resources at the Archives of Michigan*

### **Wednesday, Oct. 4:**

- 1 to 1:45 p.m.      *Beginning Your Family History Research*
- 2 to 2:45 p.m.      *Family History Resources at the Library of Michigan*
- 3 to 3:45 p.m.      *Genealogical Resources at the Archives of Michigan*

## ***Military Records***

### **Monday, Oct. 9**

- 9 to 9:45 a.m.      *Using Military Records Housed at the Archives of Michigan*
- 10 to 10:45 a.m.      *Strategies for Battling Military Records at the Library of Michigan*
- 11 to 11:45 a.m.      *Researching Your Civil War Ancestors at the Library of Michigan*



## Tuesday, Oct. 10

- 1 to 1:45 p.m.      *Using Military Records Housed at the Archives of Michigan*
- 2 to 2:45 p.m.      *Strategies for Battling Military Records at the Library of Michigan*
- 3 to 3:45 p.m.      *Researching Your Civil War Ancestors at the Library of Michigan*

## Michigan Genealogical Council Seminar

## Saturday, Oct. 14

- 9 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.      This event includes tours, workshops and the presentation of the Genealogist of the Year Award. Registration is \$15, which includes a \$5 donation to the Library of Michigan and a \$5 donation to the Michigan Genealogical Council.

## Resources for Research

## Tuesday, Oct. 17

- 9 to 9:45 a.m.      *How to Organize Your Family History Research*
- 10 to 10:45 a.m.      *Family History on the Internet*
- 11 to 11:45 a.m.      *Genealogy of a House*

## Wednesday, Oct. 18:

- 1 to 1:45 p.m.      *How to Organize Your Family History Research*
- 2 to 2:45 p.m.      *Family History on the Internet*
- 3 to 3:45 p.m.      *Genealogy of a House*

## Saturday, Oct. 21

- 1 to 2 p.m.      *Beginning Genealogy for the Visually Impaired Researcher*





## Finding Missing Ancestors

### Tuesday, Oct. 24:

- 9 to 9:45 a.m.      *French Canadian Resources at the Library of Michigan*
- 10 to 10:45 a.m.      *Coming to America: Research With Ships' Passenger Lists*
- 11 to 11:45 a.m.      *Vital Records Research at the Library of Michigan*

### Wednesday, Oct. 25:

- 1 to 1:45 p.m.      *French Canadian Resources at the Library of Michigan*
- 2 to 2:45 p.m.      *Coming to America: Research With Ships' Passenger Lists*
- 3 to 3:45 p.m.      *Vital Records Research at the Library of Michigan*

## ***Peggy Sawyer Williams Receives the 2006 Genealogy Appreciation Award***

Peggy Sawyer Williams of the Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society will be honored on Saturday, Oct. 14 by receiving the Library of Michigan's Genealogy Appreciation Award. The award is presented to a Michigan genealogist who has significantly promoted genealogical research in the state and has helped to trumpet the great resources available at the Library of Michigan. Mrs. Williams served as the president of the Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society, one of the oldest African American genealogical societies in the country, from 1999 through 2006.

The Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society, in existence since 1979, was the first African American genealogical society in the state of Michigan. Prior to her seven-year tenure as president, Mrs. Williams served in many other capacities during her 26 years as a member - including planning research trips and anniversary celebrations and duties in membership, treasurer's and secretary's areas - all of which contributed to the success of this organization of approximately 130 members.

Mrs. Williams, an experienced genealogist, has conducted numerous genealogical workshops in the Detroit and Ann Arbor areas, and has appeared on Detroit-area television and radio programs. She has a special interest in beginners, who are just starting their research. Her expertise is in organization and completion of data collection, using charts and forms, vital records and other important documents. According to her, these are essential

prerequisites for a successful family history. She has done extensive research on her Sawyer-Guy family, her husband's family and many other extended families.

Mrs. Williams is a third-generation Michiganiaan, and a direct descendant of some of the first free Black Pioneers who came to Michigan during the 1850s and 1860s. She was born in the Mid-Michigan area of Isabella County, and has lived in Detroit for over 50 years. With an educational background in business office management, she is a retired office manager of a Warren, Mich. paper distributor.

Mrs. Williams also has been active in the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, 1861-1865, for several years. Membership requires having a direct ancestor who served in the Civil War.

Peggy is married to Wallace Williams, a native Detroiter and the nephew of Fred Hart Williams, for whom the society is named. She is the mother of three children, grandmother of six, and great-grandmother of two.

"Peggy is a great ambassador for family history and very deserving of this award," said Randy Riley, special collections manager for the Library of Michigan. "She understands that researchers have to search out records wherever they may be located to find missing ancestors."

Riley added, "Peggy has been a great champion of the Library of Michigan throughout the years and the Burton Historical Collection located in the Detroit Public Library. She understands how important libraries are to family history research."

The Library of Michigan has presented the Genealogy Appreciation Award since 2001 as part of the celebration of Family History Month in October.

The award will be presented at the Michigan Genealogical Council Seminar on *Saturday, Oct. 14 at 1:30 p.m.* at the Michigan Library and Historical Center in Lansing. For additional information on the daylong seminar sponsored by the Michigan Genealogical Council, please visit the council's Web site at <http://www.rotsweb.com/~mimgc>.

## ***Piece of Civil War Battle Flag - and Michigan History - Returns Home***

The Michigan Capitol Committee, the Michigan Historical Center and Save The Flags will host a homecoming ceremony for a souvenir portion of a flag carried by the 26<sup>th</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment during the Civil War. The ceremony will take place at **1 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 28 in the Michigan Library and Historical Center's Forum.**

Viewing of the souvenir, the flag collection and the grand opening of the new flag-viewing window will immediately follow the ceremony.



In May 2006, thanks to the generosity of many organizations and individuals, David Downing - a member of Michigan's volunteer Save The Flags Task Force - was able to purchase at public auction a small souvenir portion of a battle flag carried during the Civil War by the 26th Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment.

Since donations to Save The Flags are dedicated to preserving, not purchasing, flags, the organization was faced with a dilemma when it came to its attention that this important artifact was about to be auctioned by Cowan's Auction House in Ohio. The flag souvenir was part of a larger collection associated with Benjamin Franklin Batcheler, who served first with the 26th Michigan and later as a second lieutenant with the 28th U.S. Colored Infantry Regiment.

As in the past, the Michigan Civil War community, including Civil War roundtables, re-enactors, historians, Questers chapters and many individuals, rose to the occasion. Together, they "rallied round the flag" and quickly raised the funds necessary to acquire this rare artifact. The people of Michigan are in their debt. By contributing these funds, they have ensured that this artifact - and the memory of the men who fought under it - is preserved.

Save The Flags would like to thank the following organizations and individuals who either contributed financially or worked behind the scenes to secure this piece of Michigan history:

- The Seventh Michigan, Company B
- The 14th Michigan, Company B
- The 26th Michigan, Re-enactors
- The John W. Hunter, Chapter 142 Questers
- The Ann Arbor Civil War Round Table
- The Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table
- The Blue and Gray Civil War Round Table of Saginaw
- The Grand Rapids Civil War Round Table
- The Israel B. Richardson Civil War Round Table
- The Kalamazoo Civil War Round Table
- The Michigan Regimental Civil War Round Table
- The Seventh Michigan Cavalry Civil War Round Table
- Mr. David Downin
- Mr. Bill Morris
- Ms. Pam Newhouse
- Mr. Leonard Overmyer
- Ms. Meri Schoof
- Mr. George Wilkinson



*Portion of a flag carried by the 26<sup>th</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment during the Civil War*



*Photograph of B.F. Batcheler, courtesy of Cowan's Auctions, Inc. of Cincinnati, Ohio*



# *Michigan's Family Album Featured at the Michigan Historical Museum*

*Michigan's Family Album, running now through Jan. 14, is the latest special exhibit presented by the Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing.*

Dave Tinder has spent much of his life collecting photographs. When asked about the thousands of images he owns, the Metro Detroit resident gives a straightforward answer. "One word comes to mind," he says. "Michigan."

Together, the photographs - most dating from the 1860s to the 1920s - resemble a family photo album of Michigan life.

As with many family albums, this collection includes a kaleidoscope of faces, some whose names will never be forgotten, others whose identity is lost to history. They include public figures like Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass and U.S. Senator Zachariah Chandler, as well as anonymous businessmen, workers, mothers and schoolchildren.

Family albums always include images of the places where a family lives, works and plays. The Tinder collection highlights Michigan's small towns, county seats and big cities as well as farms, railroad depots, factories, docks, mines and schools.

And what would a family album be without the laughter, tears and milestones that carry us from one year to the next? The Tinder collection has these, too - First Communion, barn raisings, weddings and graduations.

This "photo album" is much too big to place on a coffee table, so the Michigan Historical Museum, partnering with Dave Tinder and the University of Michigan's Clements Library, has created a special exhibit, *Michigan's Family Album*.

For photograph aficionados, the exhibit will feature daguerreotypes, tintypes, stereo views, cabinet cards and large-format photos, including panoramas. A note to postcard fans: *Michigan's Family Album* includes a special display of postcards honoring every county in the state.

*Michigan's Family Album* offers more than interesting images of Michigan life - an interactive computer program will allow visitors to learn more in-depth information about



*Although most photographs in Michigan's Family Album were shot by professionals, this one (circa mid 1890s), is by an amateur, F. R. Oesterrich of Detroit. The image shows a comfortably prosperous family - perhaps the photographer's own - relaxing in the backyard, probably celebrating a child's birthday.*



the photographs. Also, you will learn how to organize and exhibit a photograph or postcard collection. Find out how to “read” a photograph, and try matching photos to the panorama shots they were cropped from. Bring your own camera, because we will have backdrops and costumes for you to use to take your own fun photos!

You might wish to plan your visit around one of the following programs and workshops (most are free of charge): *Contemporary Daguerreotypes: A Workshop with Photographer Charlie Schreiner* on Oct. 14, *The Altered Polaroid and the Art of Photographing Communities* on Oct. 15, *Plastic Fantastic: Toy Camera Photography in the Digital Age* on Oct. 22, *The Art and History of Panoramic Photography* on Nov. 4, *Michigan Magic: 3-D Images of Michigan* on Dec. 2 and 3, and *Making A Living: Vintage Occupational Images* on Dec. 3.

The Michigan Historical Museum is located inside the Michigan Library and Historical Center. Visit us at <http://www.michigan.gov/museum> for more information on this unique special exhibit or the entire Michigan Historical Museum system.

*Michigan's Family Album* is sponsored, in part, by the Friends of Michigan History; Allen Charles Photography; CBRL Group Foundation (Cracker Barrel Restaurants); Engineering Graphics, Inc.; Macy's, Meridian Mall; the Michigan Historical Center Foundation; the Michigan Photographic Historical Society; Mr. and Mrs. Peter Motzenbecker; Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Walle; Mr. and Mrs. David B. Walters; and WKAR Radio Talking Book.

## ***October Events at the Michigan Historical Museum***

### **Michigan Archaeology Day**

**Saturday, Oct. 7, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.**

Each year, the Michigan Historical Museum and the Office of the State Archaeologist team up to present one of the state's most anticipated archaeology events for the general public - Michigan Archaeology Day at the Michigan Historical Museum. Here is your chance to meet professional archaeologists, to learn of their research and adventures and to see one-day-only exhibits from their archaeological digs and underwater archaeological explorations. Add to this a cartload of fun family activities, and by the end of the day, everyone will “dig” history!



## The Altered Polaroid and the Art of Photographing Communities

Sunday, Oct. 15, 2 p.m.

Photographer Cynthia Davis shows you the secrets and techniques of turning a simple Polaroid photo into an impressionistic work of art and will discuss her work creating altered Polaroids of Michigan communities. Her books *Ann Arbor*, *Traverse City and the Leelanau Peninsula* and *Saugatuck/Douglas* will be available for purchase at the Museum Store. This is one in a series of photographic workshops in conjunction with the museum's latest special exhibit, *Michigan's Family Album*.

## Plastic Fantastic: Toy Camera Photography in the Digital Age

Sunday, Oct. 22, 2 p.m.

In this age of digital photo perfection, what drives photographers to use a cheap toy camera with a plastic lens and limited controls to make serious, artistic photos? The plastic cameras once given away as carnival prizes are now used by a growing community of artists to produce imperfect but interesting photographs of our imperfect but interesting world. Newspaper photographer Bill Bresler, a member of the Ann Arbor Krappy Kamera Club, discusses the roots of the toy camera movement, shows framed examples of this art and shares how you, too, can join the toy camera community.

## History of Big Band Music

Saturday, Oct. 28, 9:30 a.m. to noon

Part of the Kimsey Dole Docent Lecture Series, this presentation by Weldon Petz will include a musical performance by the Geriatric 6.

## ***Why Private Funding is Vital to the Library of Michigan's Abrams Historical Collection***

*by Judith Moore, Executive Director, Library of Michigan Foundation*

Michigan residents may wonder why they should support the Library of Michigan's Abrams Foundation Historical Collection. The answer is simple. State funds mostly pay for building maintenance and operations. Private funds help the library purchase new materials



and implement key improvements for the collection and services. In other words, private funds fill in where state and federal funding is missing, allowing the Library of Michigan to sustain and build upon the excellence of its genealogy collection.

By making an annual gift to the Library of Michigan Foundation, donors can help the Library of Michigan retain its national standing as a top family-research destination. Donors may also opt to provide for the Library of Michigan in their will. This allows them to make a larger gift than what might be possible during their lifetime, and also receive tax benefits and recognition for their donation during their life.

To ensure the genealogy collection's continued preservation and growth, please make a gift to the Library of Michigan Foundation by sending a check to the Library of Michigan Foundation, P.O. Box 30159, Lansing, MI 48909, or by contacting Executive Director Judith Moore at (517) 373-4470.

## ***What's New at the Library of Michigan?***

Do you want to know what new Michigan and genealogy materials have been added to the Library of Michigan's collection? Look in ANSWER, our online catalog, available on the Internet at <http://answercat.org>. You can search the monthly "New Michigan and Genealogy Books" feature by clicking on the "Check for New Books" button at the bottom of the ANSWER menu page.

Please note, many of our genealogical resources are part of the non-circulating collection and are only available for on-site use at the Library of Michigan. ANSWER does not provide access to periodical articles, microforms or CD-ROM and Internet databases, but does indicate the location and call number where the item can be found in the library.

Here are a few notable titles that have arrived since the last issue of *Michigan Genealogist*.

*The Handybook for Genealogists: United States of America*

11th ed. Logan, UT: Everton Publishers, 2006

**Genealogy CS 47 .E94 2006**

Housed at genealogy desk.

One of two classic reference books that have been revised by their publisher recently.

*The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy*, edited by Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking

3rd rev. ed. Provo, UT: Ancestry, c2006.

**Genealogy CS 49 .S65 2006**

Housed at genealogy desk.

Table of contents: <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip068/2006005027.html>

This other classic is one of the best overviews of American genealogical resources available.



Shawker, Thomas H.

*Unlocking Your Genetic History: A Step-By-Step Guide to Discovering Your Family's Medical and Genetic Heritage*

Nashville, TN: Rutledge Hill Press, 2004

**Genealogy RB 155 .S44 2004**

Table of contents: <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0416/2004006461.html>

One of several books in our collection dealing with medical genetics and the use of DNA research in genealogy.

Davis, Virginia Lee Hutcheson,

*Jamestowne Ancestors, 1607-1699: Commemoration of the 400th Anniversary of the Landing at James Towne, 1607-2007*

Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2006.

**Genealogy F 229 .D38 2006**

A compilation of the names of 17<sup>th</sup>-century residents of Jamestown Island, with maps of James City and settlements in Virginia before 1624.

Although not really new, the *Counties History of the Old Northwest Series Volume Five, Michigan* has been on our shelf for years, but each individual title has not been found on ANSWER until now. Several dozen microfilmed Michigan county histories titles that before could only be discovered by chance now are readily available to researchers.

**Microfilm F 566 .C67 1973**

Philbrick, Nathaniel.

*Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War*

New York, NY: Viking, 2006.

**Genealogy F 68 .P44 2006**

"From the perilous ocean crossing to the shared bounty of the first Thanksgiving, the Pilgrim settlement of New England has become enshrined as our most sacred national myth. Yet, as author Philbrick reveals, the true story of the Pilgrims is much more than the well-known tale of piety and sacrifice; it is a 55-year epic. The Mayflower's religious refugees arrived in Plymouth Harbor during a period of crisis for Native Americans, as disease spread by European fishermen devastated their populations. Initially the two groups maintained a fragile working relationship. But within decades, New England erupted into King Philip's War, a savage conflict that nearly wiped out colonists and natives alike, and forever altered the face of the fledgling colonies and the country that would grow from them. Philbrick has fashioned a fresh portrait of the dawn of American history—dominated right from the start by issues of race, violence, and religion."—From publisher description.

# *2006 Abrams Genealogy Seminar a Success*

*by Kris Rzepczynski, Michigan/Genealogy Coordinator, Library of Michigan*

Held July 21-22 at the Library of Michigan and drawing more than 115 attendees, the 2006 Abrams Genealogy Seminar - "Explore Your Roots, Discover Your History" - brought together genealogists, librarians and subject specialists from communities all across Michigan and the United States. Long-distance travelers came from as far as Minnesota, New York, Oklahoma, Virginia and Wisconsin. We were thrilled with the seminar's turnout and the great enthusiasm of attendees and presenters.



*Attendees at an Abrams Genealogy Seminar session*

Tours on Friday afternoon gave participants the opportunity to explore the library's collections and spend some time on their research before the event officially kicked off.

Among the high points of the seminar, Curt Witcher of the Allen County Public Library, in an insightful keynote address, both outlined the impact of technology on family history research and stressed what we as researchers can do to ensure the future of our past. Other programs studied such varied topics as tracking female ancestors, online research and Michigan vital records.

One popular feature of the Abrams Genealogy Seminar was the program track featuring libraries and archives with significant genealogical and historical collections. Librarians and archivists from the Allen County Public Library, Archives of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library, Detroit Public Library, Library of Michigan and Grand Rapids Public Library each offered their expertise on how to access and better utilize their respective collections. Fantastic libraries and genealogical collections are all around us in Michigan and the Great Lakes region, and given this track's popularity, we will look at offering it again in the future.



*Keynote speaker Curt Witcher*

Thank you again to everyone who helped make this event so special: the attendees, the speakers and the Library of Michigan staff. Plans are already under way for next year's event, and we anticipate another fantastic lineup and turnout.

Information about upcoming Library of Michigan programs and events will be detailed in the *Michigan Genealogist*, so keep reading!

# ***Program Introduces Kids to Genealogy Research***

*by Gloriane Peck, Special Collections Librarian, Library of Michigan*

About 40 children learned about family history research this summer, thanks to the Library of Michigan's Genealogy Sprouts program. Two sessions at the Library of Michigan and one session at the Delta Township District Library drew kids from around mid-Michigan to learn about genealogy and to develop library skills. Participants ranged in age from preschool to 16.

Part of the Summer Sizzles Day Camp sponsored by the Michigan Historical Museum, Genealogy Sprouts gives kids a chance to learn the meaning of their first and last names, look up birth notices in Michigan newspapers on microfilm and locate ancestors on the U.S. census using Ancestry Library Edition. Children especially enjoyed seeing what was in the news on their birthday, using Time Magazine's cover search (<http://www.time.com/time/coversearch/>) and exploring the popularity of their given names, courtesy of the Social Security Administration (<http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/babynames/>).

This summer was the fourth year the library has offered the Genealogy Sprouts program. If you missed it this year, please watch for program announcements in 2007. In the meantime, the library has a number of resources to help children get started with their family history research. A guide to children's genealogical research is online at

[http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-18835\\_18895\\_20699-50174—,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-18835_18895_20699-50174—,00.html).

Some examples of how-to books available at the Library of Michigan:

Beller, Susan Provost. *Roots for Kids: A Genealogy Guide for Young People*. White Hall, VA: Betterway Publications Inc., 1989. **Genealogy CS 15.5 .B45 1989**

Douglas, Ann. *The Family Tree Detective: Cracking the Case of Your Family's Story*. Toronto: Owl Books, 1999. **Genealogy CS 15.5 .D68 1999**

Wolfman, Ira. *Do People Grow on Family Trees? Genealogy for Kids and Other Beginners*. New York: Workman Publishing, 1991. **Genealogy CS 15.5 .W65 1990**

As always, the Library of Michigan welcomes questions from beginning and advanced researchers alike! Contact us at <http://www.michigan.gov/askalibrarian>.





# *Tips for Preserving Your Family Treasures: Paper Documents*

by Carol Fink, Rare Book Librarian, Library of Michigan

Did you ever wonder what is the best way to store your paper documents or how to protect your family bible or journal? These questions and others will be addressed in a new column called "Tips for Preserving Your Family Treasures." Each column will address specific materials and their basic needs with regard to handling, display and storage. Readers are encouraged to submit questions to the newsletter. Those of general interest will be addressed in a future column.

What all documents have in common is the need to be stored either flat or in properly sized hanging folders and to be displayed or stored away from excessive light and heat. Try not to place bookshelves or file cabinets on south- or west-facing walls to avoid damage from the summer sun. Though the ideal storage temperature and humidity for paper is between 60 and 70 degrees with a relative humidity of less than 50 percent, the key point to remember is that fluctuations in temperature or humidity are far worse for paper items than slightly elevated levels. Also try to avoid storing documents in damp basements, hot attics or garages for these reasons.

Good quality paper - made with cotton rag - can have a life span of hundreds of years. However, most paper produced after 1850 has a significant amount of lignin-containing wood pulp. Lignin causes the brittleness and darkening visible on many 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century books and on newsprint just a few months old. Handling paper documents with care includes washing your hands and avoiding soaps with lotion prior to handling them, as the oils in your skin (and lotion) can cause paper to darken over time.

To display your family records - such as a marriage or baptismal certificates - properly framing the item(s) with archival materials is recommended. These materials are available for the do-it-yourselfer or may be requested at the time you hire a professional framer. When the item is fragile, you might want to consider having a facsimile copy (identical in size and color) made for the picture frame, scrapbook, etc. and permanently storing the original. Look in the Yellow Pages under photo finishing or photo copying for local contacts.

Repair techniques that cannot be reversed, such as Scotch tape, are inappropriate for items like handwritten letters or family trees. When in doubt, consult a paper conservator first. See <http://aic.stanford.edu> for more information about selecting a conservator and for names of local paper conservators, or check your local library for a copy of *Caring for Your Collections* (Abrams, 1992). It has a chapter on obtaining professional conservation services.

To summarize: Paper documents are susceptible to heat and humidity. Display and store them away from bright light, including fluorescent light, and fluctuating temperatures. Purchase acid-free folders or envelopes for long-term storage. Crystal-clear polyester film, such as Melinex, is an excellent storage material for items you want to be seen, but not handled. Ideally items should be opened and flattened before putting them in long-term storage. Again, consult a conservator for guidance.



# Using the Library of Michigan's Genealogy Web Pages

by Gloriane Peck, Special Collections Librarian, Library of Michigan

The Library of Michigan has recently revamped its genealogy Web pages. We planned the changes to make the pages easier to use and to highlight resources that could be used from outside of the library to help researchers maximize their time in the library. To acquaint users with these changes, here are some tips for using the Web site:

- Start at the library's home page, <http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan>.
- Scroll down the page until you see a box with the heading Services for Patrons. There is a link to Genealogy in this box. Follow this link.
- On the Genealogy main page, you will see links in the left rail to the Department of History, Arts, and Libraries' essential genealogy research tools: **ANSWER**, the Library's online catalog; **Michigan 1870 Census**; **Michigan Cemetery Sources**; **Michigan County Clerks Directory**; and **Michigan Naturalization Record Indexes**.
- Other links in the left rail go to **Conducting Your Genealogy Research**, which has guides to beginning family history research; information about using the Library of Michigan, including a virtual tour; and forms and charts; **Genealogy Questions Answered**, which gives you the opportunity to submit a reference question or to access the Michigan Genealogy Research Network; **Genealogy Web Links**, which lists Web sites of interest, including vital records for several states and a number of Michigan counties; and **Michigan Newspapers**, a list of newspapers available on microfilm at the Library of Michigan.
- The links on the left rail appear on all the pages within the Genealogy area of the Web site, so you may always get back to the main page or select one of these resources.
- In the center of the Web page, be sure to check the **Announcements** section for the latest information about events such as Family History Month, Learning More at the Library of Michigan and the Abrams Genealogy Seminar.



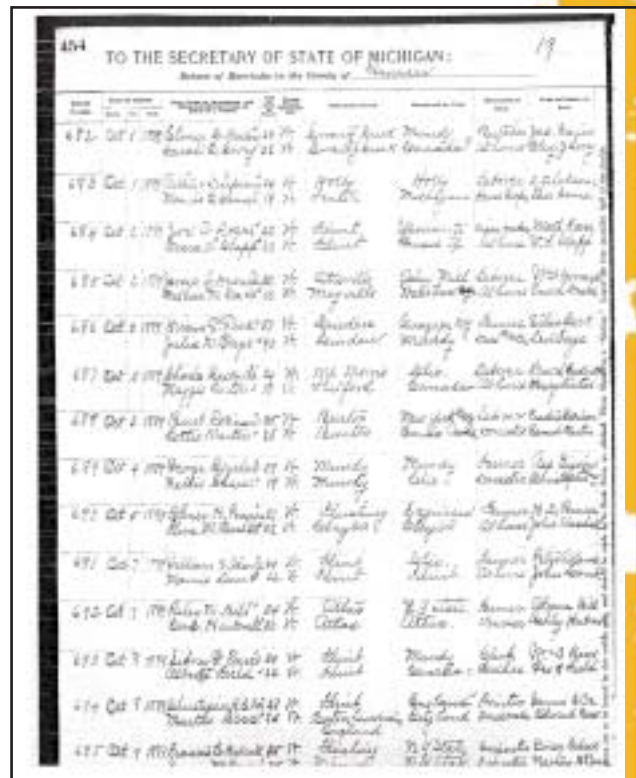
- Below the Announcements section, you will see two different headings. The first is to **Using the Library and Archives**. Here, again, you will see links to **Conducting Your Genealogy Research** and to **Genealogy Questions Answered**, as well as a link to the *Michigan Genealogist* newsletter.
- The last section, **Online Research Tools**, provides another spot to connect to the resources in the rail on the left side of the page. This section also includes links to the **Archives of Michigan Circulars**, which describe records available for a particular topic, and the **Library of Michigan Subject Guides**, which provide tips for research and a list of helpful resources for specific areas of genealogy study. These quarterly publications are also known as *Abrams Collection Genealogy Highlights*.



## Online Michigan Vital Record Indexes

by Charles Hagler, Reference Librarian, Library of Michigan

There are several online indexes to state and county birth, marriage and death records available to those researching their family tree. The staff at the Library of Michigan has selected these Web sites that stated the source of their transcriptions were actual county or state records or a microfilm copy of those records. These sites do not cover the same time period and are maintained by different organizations. They also do not cover probate court marriages or births by unmarried women between 1933 and 1978; those records are located only with the state Vital Records Division.



*A marriage record from 1889*

It is important to remember that only the counties kept records of marriages and divorces until 1867. After that date both the state and counties kept these records. The issuing of marriage licenses began in 1888, which means that marriages were recorded in the location where the couple obtained their license, not where they were actually got married. The state and counties also began keep track of births and deaths beginning in 1867, but they only began issuing death certificates in 1898 and birth certificates in 1906. Not all births and deaths in Michigan were recorded prior to these aforementioned dates. The state began to keep statewide records of divorces in 1897.



Barry County Clerk's Office

<http://www.barrycounty.org/Departments/Clerk.htm>

Indexes to births, deaths and marriages from the beginning of the county to the present.

Branch County Clerk's Office

<http://www.co.branch.mi.us/deathsearch.taf>

Search their death index.

Cheboygan County Index to Deaths and Marriages

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~micheboy/toc.html#vital>

From the LDS microfilms covering the years 1867-1933 for deaths and 1869-1925 for marriages.

GENDIS

<http://www.mdch.state.mi.us/pha/osr/gendisx/search2.htm>

Michigan Genealogical Death Indexing System - search for information from archived death records. Currently contains information on 81,540 Michigan death records from 1867 to 1885.

Genesee County Clerk's Vital Records Services

<http://www.co.genesee.mi.us/clerk/information.htm>

Search for death records dating back to 1930 and marriage records dating back to 1963. Includes information and forms for ordering records.

Genesee County Death Index

[http://www.rootsweb.com/~mifgs/rbindex/rbindex.html?o\\_xid=0028727949&o\\_lid=0028727949&o\\_xt=28727949](http://www.rootsweb.com/~mifgs/rbindex/rbindex.html?o_xid=0028727949&o_lid=0028727949&o_xt=28727949)

Index transcribed by the Flint Genealogical Society from county records from 1867 to 1930.

Grand Traverse County Records

<http://www.tcnet.org/gtcounty>

An index to the records maintained at the Grand Traverse County Clerk's Office.

Ingham County Clerk's Office

<http://www2.ingham.org/icors/clerks/>

Indexes to marriages dating back to 1986 and deaths dating back to 1991.

Isabella County Online Vital Statistics

<http://www.mifamilyhistory.org/isabella/cenvital.html>

Transcribed index of births 1867-1904, marriages 1857-1890 and deaths 1867-1924.

Kent County Marriage Index, Western Michigan Genealogical Society

<http://www.wmgs.org/research/default.htm>

A searchable index to Kent County, Mich., marriages from 1849 to 1929. This is still a work in progress.

### Livingston County Michigan Death Index

<http://www.memoriallibrary.com/MI/Livingston/Death/>

Transcribed from LDS microfilm covering the years 1867-1948.

### Macomb County Clerk's Office

<http://64.9.117.153/Death.do>

Search the county's death record index for 1867-1933.

### Manistee County Record of Death Index

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~mimanist/ManDeathIndex.html>

Transcription of the County Death Index 1869-1973.

Michigan Death Index on Ancestry Library Edition (ALE), found at your local Michigan library in the collection of free databases available through the Michigan eLibrary (MeL). Includes over 2.75 million records, covering the years from 1971 to 1996. Each entry includes the following information: the full name of the decedent; birth and death dates; the last name of decedent's father; the state, county, and town where decedent died; and the state, county, and town of residence at death.

Michigan Marriage Records 1851 to 1870 on Ancestry Library Edition (ALE), found at your local Michigan library in the collection of free databases available through the Michigan eLibrary (MeL). Records of Wayne, Branch, Hillsdale, Jackson and Kent Counties from LDS microfilm. Includes bride and groom names and the date and place of the marriage.

### Muskegon County Genealogical Death Indexing

<http://www.co.muskegon.mi.us/clerk/websearch.cfm>

Work in progress of entering all Muskegon County deaths between 1867 and 1965.

### Online Michigan Death Records and Indexes

<http://www.deathindexes.com/michigan/>

A guide to online vital records and obituaries. It does not contain any actual records, only links to the records.

### Ottawa County Death Records

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~miottawa/deaths/ottawa/index.html>

Transcribed from county records covering the years 1867-1901.

### Saginaw County Clerk's Office

<http://www.saginawcounty.com/clerk/search/index.html>

Index to marriages and deaths from 1995 on.

### Saint Clair County, Mich., Index to Death Records

[http://www.rootsweb.com/~mistcla2/?o\\_xid=0028727949&o\\_lid=0028727949&o\\_xt=28727949](http://www.rootsweb.com/~mistcla2/?o_xid=0028727949&o_lid=0028727949&o_xt=28727949)

Transcribed indexes from county records covering the years 1868-1974.

### Saint Joseph County, Mich., Death Index

<http://members.tripod.com/~tfred/67-29ind.html>

Index to Saint Joseph County Clerk's records of deaths from 1867 to 1929.

Schoolcraft County Death Index:

[http://www.rootsweb.com/~mischool/death1.htm?o\\_xid=0028727949&o\\_lid=0028727949&o\\_xt=28727949](http://www.rootsweb.com/~mischool/death1.htm?o_xid=0028727949&o_lid=0028727949&o_xt=28727949)

Index to Schoolcraft County records from 1870 to 1899.

Tuscola County Death Records Online

<http://www.usgennet.org/usa/mi/county/tuscola/deaths/deathsindex.htm>

Transcription of death records from 1867 to 1903.

Washtenaw County Clerk/Register's Office

<http://secure.ewashtenaw.org/ecommerce/vitalrecord/vrHome.do>

Index to marriages dating back to 1965 and deaths dating back to 1960.

Here are some additional Web sites that assist the reader in ordering copies of records:

Directory of Michigan County Clerk's Offices

[http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17449\\_18635\\_20736---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17449_18635_20736---,00.html)

Michigan Division of Vital Records and Health Statistics

<http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,1607,7-132-4645---,00.html>

## ***Plat Maps and Genealogical Research***

*by Leelyn Johnson, Reference Coordinator, Library of Michigan*

The definition of plat is “a map, drawn to scale, showing how a piece of land is divided.”  
(Source: Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia)

The process of dividing and describing lands in the United States began after the Revolutionary War, when Thomas Jefferson proposed a systematic survey of the public domain lands outside of the 13 original colonies. This process began with the Land Ordinance of 1785 and was followed by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which established a rectangular survey system. Today the Public Land Survey System (PLSS), regulated by the Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, continues this system.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, plats were published in county atlases. Atlases included maps of towns and villages within the county, but the names of property owners only appear in the rural areas.



The more recent plats are based on the PLSS and show land ownership patterns county-by-county. These are usually compiled in a county plat book. The public and private property shown on the plats is a view in time of the last deed-holder of a particular piece of land.

County plat books can be used to search for ancestors if they were landowners, even when you are not able to find them in any other genealogical resource like the census.

## *Virginia Genealogy for Michiganders*

*by Edwina Morgan, Special Collections Librarian, Library of Michigan*

Does your family have roots in Virginia? You might be surprised. Today Virginia has defined borders with 100 counties. This was not always the case. Decades after the colonies of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia were well established on maps, few colonial administrators and residents really knew where the boundaries were, much less agreed upon them. The longest-lasting boundary discrepancy, between Virginia and Pennsylvania, was not settled until 1792. Even after that date, rivers that formed boundaries were one of the few sure ways individuals knew in which state they lived.

One of the links between Virginia and Michigan is the Ohio River. Virginia claimed the entire Northwest Territory until 1784. West Virginia did not become an independent state until the Civil War. Between these two lands ran the Ohio River, which was a main gateway to the Mississippi watershed, New Orleans and western expansion. Well before the American Revolution, individuals were traveling west to trade, hunt and seek out land. Maps dating from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century have sections of what is now Ohio and Michigan marked with notations of "fine land." Settlers, and at times squatters, would travel down the Ohio to advance west and north to what are now northern Indiana, Illinois and Michigan. If a family had ancestors from Ohio or Indiana in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they may very well have originated in Virginia.

The British in Detroit also linked what is now Michigan with Virginia. The American Revolution was fought on the east coast and in the southern colonies of Georgia and South Carolina. Few realize the level of hostilities in the far western regions of what was at the time called Pennsylvania and Virginia. Americans were pushing west while the British in Detroit were trying to hold as much land as possible. Military raids and full attacks were launched from British Detroit against the Americans living on the frontier. At the same time, these western regions were isolated from assistance due to the mountains that divided them from the eastern seaboard. Many Americans had to accept British offers of peace and protection because of their refugee status. As a result of the hostilities, Americans were also taken captive and often ransomed at the British forts. Others landed in outside of American territory, as there was a demand for skilled tradespersons and thus stable occupations in an unstable region.



Virginia, research may have an even greater value for individuals researching their African American heritage. One transcribed source lists no less than 3,000 slaves held in Orange County, Va., between 1734 and 1782. This list includes first name, the surname of the owner and often the age. Historically slave owners migrated due west and south and not into the Northwest Territory, where slave owning was prohibited. However, many individuals of African descent made their way to Michigan before and after slavery was outlawed throughout the nation.

Genealogical information on families residing in “Virginia” can be found in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and, at times, Michigan. Thousands of settlers were pouring into Virginia and pushing west as early as the 1730s. After the French and Indian War, settlers - often former British military personnel - advanced across the Blue Ridge Mountains. After the Revolutionary War, the Ohio River was the main highway for thousands of pioneers moving west, taking up land in what is now Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and points further west. The Ohio River was also one of the largest physical hurdles to be crossed by former slaves seeking freedom.

Traditionally, the first, best path in tracing ancestors is the American federal census. In the case of Virginia, this remains a valid approach from 1930 back to 1820. Prior to 1820, not all of the American censuses taken have been preserved for Virginia. Census alternatives may be available for some counties in the form of tax and tithable lists, slaveholder records, mortality census and an 1840 Revolutionary War pension census. A search on the Library of Michigan's online catalog, Answer (<http://www.answercat.org>), may lead you to any resources available for the counties needed. Of note is the 1790 substitute census of landowners, not to be confused with the heads of all households:

United States Bureau of the Census, *Heads of Families at the First Census of the US Taken in 1790: Records of the State Enumerations, 1782-1785*.

Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company. 1999.

**Genealogy F225 .H44 1999**

Should you not be able to find your ancestors in an early “Virginia” census or census substitute, you may want to try regional census material in Ohio, Kentucky and Michigan. While Michigan did not become a full state until 1837, a diverse population did move into the area well before it became an American territory. The French and the British both took census counts covering the years 1710, 1743, 1750, 1762, 1765, 1768, 1779, 1782 and 1796. In 1802, while Michigan was a section of Indiana Territory, the Americans composed a tax list for the Detroit region. Americans composed further census records in 1810, 1820 and 1830. While many of these lists cover the Detroit area for the most part, counts were also taken in other centers of population, notably the area of Fort Saint Joseph in Berrien County and Michilimackinac. In 1805 the city of Prairie du Chien, in what is now Wisconsin, was included. Not only was there a fort located in that city, but, like Michilimackinac, it was a major center for the fur trade. The pre-statehood records for “Michigan” are available at the Library of Michigan:

Ruddell, Donna Valley. *Michigan Censuses 1710-1830 Under the French, British, and Americans*. Detroit: Detroit Society for Genealogical Research, INC. 1982.

**Michigan F 565 .M523z**

Colonial Virginia was indeed the mother of several states, and many Michiganders may be able to trace their family back to that colony, or at least land held by Virginia. American colonists spread out west from Virginia, utilizing preexisting routes and trails. Their ability and willingness to migrate may have researchers looking in unexpected sources far afield from where they think their family should have been. Land, trade and military service may have placed them in Michigan territory earlier than imagined.

## Publisher's Note:

The Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) electronically publishes *Michigan Genealogist* on a quarterly basis. It is intended to provide family history-related information to interested researchers and to inform readers about resources found in the Library of Michigan, Archives of Michigan and other HAL departments.

We encourage wide distribution of this newsletter and invite readers to share it with their friends, families and fellow researchers. We have made every effort to provide accurate information. However, the publisher does not assume any liability to any party for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions related to any of the issues of *Michigan Genealogist*.

If you would like to be added to our list of e-mail subscribers, please contact HAL at [librarian@michigan.gov](mailto:librarian@michigan.gov).

## Driving Directions and Parking:

Information concerning driving directions and parking can be located at the following Web sites.

Driving Directions: [www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160—55205,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160—55205,00.html)

Parking: [www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17445\\_19274\\_20001—,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17445_19274_20001—,00.html)

## Research:

Due to the length of time needed to conduct genealogical research, the staff of the Library of Michigan and State Archives is unable provide extensive research services. Check the Library of Michigan and State Archives' Web pages at [www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan](http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan) and [www.michigan.gov/statearchives](http://www.michigan.gov/statearchives) for more information on policies and procedures regarding genealogical research.

## Ask A Librarian:

Genealogy queries can be sent to the Library of Michigan at [librarian@michigan.gov](mailto:librarian@michigan.gov). While staff members cannot do extensive research, they can point you in the right direction and assist you in determining if the library's collection contains the information you seek. If necessary, the library's staff will refer you to a researcher or local genealogical society that will conduct research for a fee. Questions relating to the State Archives of Michigan should be sent to [archives@michigan.gov](mailto:archives@michigan.gov).



The Department of History, Arts and Libraries is dedicated to enriching quality of life and strengthening the economy by providing access to information, preserving and promoting Michigan's heritage and fostering cultural creativity. The department includes the Library of Michigan, the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, the Michigan Film Office and the Michigan Historical Center.